A CRITICAL STYDY OF MAJOR NOVELS OF NADINE GORDIMER IN CORRELATION TO MIRIAM ALLOT'S THEORY OF NOVEL

A Synopsis Submitted for the award of Ph.D. Degree to IITM University, Meerut

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INTRODUCTION

As a literary artist Nadine Gordimer can be ranked with Ernest Hemingway, Pearl S. Buck, G.B. Shaw and V.S. Naipaul as she raised her voice against racial discrimination at the world level. It is a bitter fact that her novels wore often banned in South Africa because she asked the Blacks to get organized for brave new world. There is a difference between political propaganda treatise and a piece of art. As an artist she painted what she really had seen in the streets of Cape Town, Johannesburg and other areas of South Africa — Whites exploited the blacks to the best of their ability. At the same time she aspired for a society based on racial harmony, mutual love, lack of violence and pseudo-egoticism.

India became free in 1947 and with this world event many African nations felt inspired to struggle for national freedom. Under the supervision of various political leaders they raised their voice for liberty, equality and fraternity. After all blacks too wanted to get higher education. They soon realized that the White authorities regarded administration as White man's burden. The blacks wanted medical facilities alongwith old age security. Above all they wanted to lead a life of self-dignity and that was not possible without independence and fundamental rights. Unfortunately, the Whites made them feel that the latter had no culture, no civilization, no history, no past and no self-dignity. Even in U.S.A. blacks were sold and purchased by the White traders like animals. Abraham Lincoln had to sacrifice himself for their liberty and granted them equal rights (1861).

Yet the situation didn't improve in real life in many African countries and the Whites, though few in number, continued to deny them the right to equality. Nadine Gordimer resisted against all this apartheid policy of the Whites as she loved man as man — God made man and man made the town. Here town means man made prejudices,

animosities and inequalities on the basis of caste, colour and creed. Like Eugene O' Neill, she got the Nobel prize for literature and peaceful efforts. She got the Booker prize for fiction quite earlier.

As an intellectual she accepts Miriam Allott's theory of fiction regarding —

(a) 'Novel and the marvellous'
(b) The novel 'As a portrait of life'
(c) The Ethics of The Novel'
(d) The 'Novelist's Approach'
(e) 'Germenation'
(f) The 'Craft of The Novel'

(with emphasis upon 'Characterization', 'Style' etc.)

In the present scenario her novel *Get A Life* is most popular as the artist describes the mental and physical tensions of Paul, a patient of cancer of glands. He has to survive in quarantine due to radiation in his body and nobody is allowed to meet him. Only Lyndsay, the humble mother, dares to meet him at the risk of life. Paul is worried about the future of his wife Benni and son Niche — what'll happen to them if he dies of cancer. Yet he survives and joins his job as ecologist. Here the artist makes the readers aware of threats to environment as global warming and pollution are major urban problems. This novel is still studied with interest and the artist makes efforts to let the best ideas prevail in society.

In the novel *July's People* Nadine Gordimer refers to the terrible policy of apartheid as the blacks organize themselves against the Whites and revolt for equality and liberty. Through this imaginative revolution she warns the Whites to take care of their life as blacks really revolt under the leadership of their dedicated leaders. Here Bam Smales and Maureen leave Johannesburg by their truck in the midnight and settle with July, the black servant who had served them for the last five years. The tensions of Whites have been described in a truthful manner

and she mixes the marvellous with realism. In the end Maureen runs and runs from the problems and complexities of life towards the helicopter — an escapist as she is.

In the novel *The Pickup* Nadine Gordimer illustrates the problems of Abdu, an illegal immigrant in Johannesburg city. Julie, a rich modern Hippie girl loves him from the depth of heart. When Abdu is ordered to 'pickup' as an illegal immigrant, she decides to join him to Ibrahim Ibn Musa, an Arabian deserted country where women don't have equal rights and lead a wretched and backward life due to lack of education and fundamental rights. Here the artist, a strong feminist, supports the cause of backward Muslim ladies and at the same time analyzes the results of global capitalism due to liberalization and globalization.

In *No Time Like The President* she refers to results of HIV positive and AIDS diseases in details and creates awakening among readers regarding self-restraint. Other contemporary issues have also been described by her truthfully.

In *The Lying Days* she speaks against the hypocrisy of Whites against the blacks — a theme that she mentions in other novels also. Through Helen she exposes the racial discrimination that hurt her aesthetic sensibilities.

So, Nadine Gordimer is out and out a realist and various shades of realism are found in her novels. Secondly, she knows the art of narration well and does not depend upon episodic intensification and interpolated stories for the development of the plot. She introduced the people she had know and met in her life. The language of her novels is simple, clear and lucid.

Objectives/Purpose of Study :

My purpose of studying the major tragic novels of Nadine Gordimer is —

i. To illustrate her interest in contemporary socio-economic and ethico-political issues.

ii. To understand the results of apartheid policy.

iii. To answer the question — 'How to live?'

iv. To present novel as a 'criticism of life'?

v. To make the best ideas prevail in society.

Preliminary Work Done (Review of Literature) :

So far I have studied a few chapters of Miriam Allott's theory of novel as given in the book entitled *Novelists On The Novel*. I have studied the novels *Get A Life* and *July's People*. From You-tube I have listened the critical lectures on *No Time Like The Present, The Pickup* etc. I have studied almost hundred pages of books *Nadine Gordimer : As Altruistic Reformer* and *Nadine Gordimer As A Writer A Study of Liberation And Nationalism* written by Ningnna T. published by Current Publications Agra. To analyze and understand socio-political issues of 20th century I have studied Sneh Mahajan's book *Issues in Twentieth-Century World History*. I hope to utilize my reading of current affairs as illustrated in *The Times of India* and *India Today*. I have studied a few articles on www.website on Nadine Gordiner's narrative skills.

Research Methology :

M.L.A. pattern will be followed for documentation.

Importance And Justification :

There is every need to study the novels of Nadine Gordimer as she analyzed the socio-economic and political issues truthfully. Many researchers have tried to focus on her zeal for social, political and economic reforms. As an artist she does not write for money or for personal glory. I have selected her novels for research work as she wants to solve the various problems of the earthly people. Of course, she follows the theory of art for morality and does not transport the readers to any utopian world. Domain Grant's theory of *Realism* has been followed by her and hence it is worthwhile to focus on her novels.

Her Stylistic Devices:

She does not use bombastic words to make a parade of learning. There are a few foreign words in her novels and they fail to tarnish her image as a writer.

Hypothesis:

My hypothesis is: —

1. No superfluous incidents have been included in the novels by her.
2. Every plot is compact and well knit.
3. No character can be taken out of the plot without affecting the main plot.
4. It is a fact that she writes on human nature.
5. She does not cross he limits of moral ethics.
6. She never makes political propaganda in favour of any ism except humanism.
7. Critics and political authorities failed to break her nerves.

TENTATIVE CHAPTERIZATION

1. Introduction: (Germination)

Felt indebted to many French, British and African writers specially William Shakespeare, Neruda, W.B. Yeats, Thomas Hardy, Lenin etc. Got disgusted with the effects of two world wars; Felt interested in Nelson Mandela's struggle for equality and liberty; As member of P.E.N.; Theory of novel as given by Miriam Allott; Follows the concept of the 'Marvellous' in fiction; etc.

2. The Novel And Probability As Examplified With No Time Like Present : (Follows the Concept novel as portrait of Life)

3. Socio-ethical Realism In Get A Life :

Quarantine psychology of the patient and his wife and parents; Job's Tensions; Ethical issues raised in the novel; *Get A* Life as a criticism of life; Her interest in probable people ecological issues; etc.

4. Her Moral Vision With Special Reference to July's People:

Sincerity and devotion of July towards Smales and Maureen; Whites and the rising of black revolt; Danger to the life all Whites; Uncertain future; Portrayal of the miseries of rural blacks; Her hope for betterment in future; etc.

5. Concept of Personal Freedom Contrasted With Immigration Rules In The Pickup :

Economic gaps between the Haves and Have Nots; Economic factors influence the political issues of Johannesburg; Lovely life of Julie; Abdu's helpless in Johannesburg and Arabian village; Points out the conflict between people of negative psychology and positive psychology; etc.

6. Major Universed Issues Analyzed Critically In No Time Like Present : (Her Approach to life And Literature)

Her Quest for identity; Asks people to rise above class-consciousness; Her analysis of causes of unemployment and corruption; etc.

7. Conclusion:

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